

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-42. (Canceled)

43. (Original) A record medium for recording a control program that causes an inputting unit to input information representing time to a researching unit, the control program causing the inputting unit to perform the steps of:

(a) storing time information representing predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;

(b) transmitting the time information representing the predetermined time stored at the storing step (a) to an external unit; and

(c) inputting the time information representing the predetermined time to a searching unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to the time information representing the predetermined time at which contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

44. (Original) The record medium as set forth in claim 43, wherein the control program causing the inputting unit to further perform the step of:

(d) displaying the number of entries of the time information representing the predetermined time stored at the storing step (a).

45. (Original) A record medium for recording a control program that causes an inputting unit having a counter that operates with a predetermined clock signal and that inputs information representing time to a searching unit, the control program causing the inputting unit to perform

the steps of:

(a) storing a count value of the counter at predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;

(b) transmitting the count value stored at the storing step (a) to an external unit; and

(c) inputting the information representing time to the searching unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to the information representing time at which contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

46. (Original) The record medium as set forth in claim 45, the control program causing the inputting unit to further perform the step of:

(d) displaying the number of entries of the time information representing the predetermined time stored at the storing step (a).

47. (Original) An inputting unit for inputting information representing time, comprising:

a counter that operates with a predetermined clock signal;

storing means for storing a count value of said counter at predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;

a connecting portion for directly connecting the count value stored in said storing means to an external unit; and

communicating means for transmitting the count value stored in said storing means to the external unit through said connecting portion,

wherein the information representing time is input to a searching unit through the external unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database

corresponding to the information representing time at which contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

48. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 47, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about contents.

49. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 47, wherein the predetermined time is time at which the user knows his or her desired contents.

50. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 47, further comprising:
junction means having:

a base having an attaching portion for attaching said connecting portion, the attaching portion being disposed on an upper surface of said base; and

connecting means, protruding from the attaching portion, for connecting the external unit,

wherein said communicating means transmits the count value through said junction means.

51. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 50, wherein said junction means has a lid integrally formed with a main body of the inputting unit.

52. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 47, wherein the external unit is an information terminal unit that is installed as a public unit.

53. (Original) An inputting unit for inputting information representing time, comprising:
a counter that operates with a predetermined clock signal;
storing means for storing a count value of said counter at predetermined time

corresponding to user's operation;

displaying means for displaying the count value stored in said storing means; and
communicating means for transmitting the count value stored in said storing means to an
external unit,

wherein information representing time is input to a searching unit, the searching unit
searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to the information
representing time at which the contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the
information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

54. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 53, wherein the count value is
represented with spherical members on one side of said displaying means.

55. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 54, wherein when the count value
is transmitted by said communicating means, the number of spherical members gradually
decreases on one side of said displaying means, and

wherein when part of the spherical members disappears, the other spherical members
move to the positions at which the spherical members disappear.

56. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 53, wherein said displaying means
is formed in an almost square shape, and

wherein members representing the count value are arranged in a lattice shape irrespective
of the storing order of entries of the information representing time stored in said storing means.

57. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 53, wherein the count value is
represented with rod shaped members.

58. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 53, wherein the count value is

represented as the size of an area of said displaying means.

59. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 53, wherein the predetermined time is time at which the user knows his or her desired broadcast contents.

60. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 53, wherein said communicating means transmits the count value to an information terminal unit that is installed as a public unit.

61. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 53, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about the contents.

62. (Original) An inputting unit for inputting information representing time, comprising: ↵
a counter that operates with a predetermined clock signal;
storing means for storing a count value of said counter at predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;
communicating means for transmitting the count value stored in said storing means to an external unit; and
sound generating means for generating a sound corresponding to the count value stored in said storing means,

wherein information representing time is input to a searching unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to the information representing time at which the contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

63. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 62, wherein said sound generating means generates a sound corresponding to the predetermined operation when the count value stored in said storing means exceeds a predetermined value.

64. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 62, wherein said sound generating means generates a sound when the count value stored in said storing means exceeds a predetermined value and the predetermined operation is performed.

65. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 62, wherein the predetermined time is time at which the user knows his or her desired broadcast contents.

66. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 62, wherein said communicating means transmits the count value to an information terminal unit that is installed as a public unit.

67. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 62, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about the contents.

68. (Original) An inputting unit for inputting information representing time, comprising: 6
a counter that operates with a predetermined clock signal;
first storing means for storing a count value of said counter at predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;
identification information generating means for generating predetermined identification information corresponding to the user's operation;
second storing means for storing the identification information generated by said identification information generating means; and
communicating means for transmitting the count value and the identification information stored in said first storing means and said second storing means to an external unit,
wherein information representing time and identification information identifying contents are input to a searching unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to the information representing time at which the contents were

broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

69. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 68, wherein said first storing means and said second storing means store the count value and the identification information to a common memory disposed in the inputting unit.

70. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 68, wherein said first storing means and said second storing means store the count value and the identification information to discrete memories disposed in the inputting unit.

71. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 68, further comprising:
pressing means composed of at least one button,
wherein said identification information generating means detects the pressing manner of the user against the button and generates the identification information that varies corresponding to the pressing manner.

72. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 68, further comprising:
displaying means for displaying the count value stored in said first storing means,
wherein said displaying means displays the count value in a different manner that varies corresponding to the identification information.

73. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 68, wherein the predetermined time is time at which the user knows his or her desired broadcast contents.

74. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 68, wherein said communicating means transmits the count value to an information terminal unit that is installed as a public unit.

75. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 68, wherein the identification

information identifying the contents is information that identifies whether the contents are television broadcast contents or radio broadcast contents.

76. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 68, wherein the identification information identifying the contents is information that identifies whether the contents were broadcast in a predetermined area or out of the predetermined area.

77. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 68, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about the contents.

78. (Original) An inputting unit for inputting information representing time, comprising: 7
a counter that operates with a predetermined clock signal;

first storing means for storing a count value of said counter at predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;

communicating means for communicating with an external unit and transmitting the count value stored in said first storing means to an external unit; and

second storing means for storing data transmitted from an external unit through said communicating means,

wherein information representing time is input to a searching unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to the information representing time at which the contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

79. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 78, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about the contents.

80. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 78, wherein the data stored in said

second storing means is the contents or information thereabout.

81. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 78, wherein the data stored in said second storing means is compression-encoded audio data, and

wherein the inputting unit further comprises:

audio data reproducing means for decoding the compression-encoded audio data and reproducing the decoded audio data.

82. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 78, wherein the data is encrypted data corresponding to a predetermined encrypting method, and

wherein the inputting unit further comprises:


decrypting means for decrypting the encrypted data.

83. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 78, wherein said first storing means and said second storing means store the count value and the data to a common memory disposed in the inputting unit.

84. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 78, wherein said first storing means and said second storing means store the count value and the data to discrete memories disposed in the inputting unit.

85. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 78, wherein the predetermined time is time at which the user knows his or her desired broadcast contents.

86. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 78, wherein said communicating means transmits the count value to an information terminal unit that is installed as a public unit.

87. (Original) An inputting unit for inputting information representing time, comprising: 
storing means for storing time information representing predetermined time

corresponding to user's operation;

displaying means for displaying the number of entries of the time information stored in said storing means; and

communicating means for transmitting the time information stored in said storing means to an external unit,

wherein information representing time is input to a searching unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to the time information representing time at which the contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

88. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 87, wherein the predetermined time is time at which the user knows his or her desired broadcast contents.

89. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 87, wherein said communicating means transmits the count value to an information terminal unit that is installed as a public unit.

90. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 87, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about the contents.

91. (Original) An inputting unit for inputting information representing time, comprising:
first storing means for storing time information representing predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;

communicating means for communicating with an external unit and transmitting the time information stored in said first storing means to the external unit; and

second storing means for storing data transmitted from the external unit through said communicating means,

wherein information representing time is input to a searching unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to the time information representing time at which the contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

92. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 91, wherein the data stored in said second storing means is the contents or information thereabout.

93. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 91, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about the contents.

94. (Original) An inputting unit for inputting information representing time, comprising: \ a counter that operates with a predetermined clock signal;
storing means for storing a count value of said counter at predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;
sound generating means for generating a predetermined sound when the count value is stored to said storing means corresponding to the user's operation; and
communicating means for transmitting the count value stored in said storing means to an external unit,

wherein information representing time is input to a searching unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to the information representing time at which the contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

95. (Original) The inputting unit as set forth in claim 94, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about the contents.

96. An inputting method for an inputting unit having a counter that operates with a predetermined clock signal, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) storing a count value of the counter at predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;

(b) directly connecting the count value stored at the storing step (a) to an external unit; and

(c) transmitting the count value stored at the storing step (a) to the external unit connected at the connecting step (b),

wherein information representing time is input to a searching unit through the external unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to time information representing time at which the contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

97. (Original) The inputting method as set forth in claim 96, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about the contents.

98. (Original) An inputting method for an inputting unit having a counter that operates with a predetermined clock signal, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) storing a count value of the counter at predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;

(b) displaying the count value stored at the storing step (a); and

(c) communicating the count value stored at the storing step (a) to an external unit,

wherein information representing time is input to a searching unit, the searching unit

searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to time information representing time at which the contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

99. (Original) The inputting method as set forth in claim 98, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about the contents.

100. (Original) An inputting method for an inputting unit having a counter that operates with a predetermined clock signal, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) storing a count value of the counter at predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;

(b) transmitting the count value stored at the storing step (a) to an external unit; and

(c) generating a sound corresponding to the count value stored at the storing step (a),

wherein information representing time is input to a searching unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to time information representing time at which the contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

101. (Original) The inputting method as set forth in claim 100, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about the contents.

102. (Original) An inputting method for an inputting unit having a counter that operates with a predetermined clock signal, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) storing a count value of the counter at predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;

(b) generating predetermined identification information corresponding to the user's

operation;

(c) storing the identification information generated at the identification information generating step (b);

(d) transmitting the count value and the identification information stored at the first storing step (a) and the second storing step (c) to an external unit,

wherein information representing time is input to a searching unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to time information representing time at which the contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

103. (Original) The inputting method as set forth in claim 102, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about the contents.

104. (Original) An inputting method for an inputting unit having a counter that operates with a predetermined clock signal, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) storing a count value of the counter at predetermined time corresponding to user's operation;

(b) communicating with an external unit and transmitting the count value stored at the first storing step (a) to the external unit; and

(c) storing the data transmitted from the external unit at the communicating step (b),

wherein information representing time is input to a searching unit, the searching unit searching information representing contents from a database corresponding to time information representing time at which the contents were broadcast, the database correlatively storing the information representing the contents and broadcast time thereof.

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105. (Original) The inputting method as set forth in claim 104, wherein the information representing the contents includes information about the contents.